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1 September 1988

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MEMORANDUM FOR:

Executive Secretary

FROM:

Charles E. Allen

National Intelligence Officer for Warning

SUBJECT:

House Armed Services Committee Hearings

Attached is a memorandum that I have sent to the Chairman of the National Intelligence Council. I recognize that Congressman Aspin has asked specifically for a CIA briefing on this issue, but I find it inconceivable that the National Intelligence Officer for Warning should not be in the middle for this briefing, given the Congressionally-mandated charter and Director of Central Intelligence Directive, respectively, that assigns him the responsibility for coordination of strategic warning issues for the Intelligence Community.

Charles

Attachments: As stated

1 September 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, National Intelligence Council

Vice Chairman, National Intelligence Council

FROM:

Charles E. Allen

- National Intelligence Officer for Warning

SUBJECT:

House Armed Services Committee Hearings

- l. Hearings next week before the Defense Policy Panel of the House Armed Services Committee will focus on Soviet mobilization readiness and the warning times we would likely have of a Soviet decision to mobilize. Although the Congressional letter from Congressman Aspin is addressed to CIA, this clearly is an Intelligence Community issue. The position of the National Intelligence Officer for Warning was established in 1978 in response to a Congressional charge that there must be a single focus for intelligence efforts in warning.
- 2. I have attached for your review the letters from the Committee to the DCI and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I am gravely concerned that these hearing could embarrass the Chairman and much worse, set back the significant progress we have made in persuading JCS planners that intelligence can provide earlier and more reliable warning of Soviet mobilization.
- 3. The hearings are at a somewhat awkward time. While there is a growing consensus in the Intelligence Community that we will have earlier warning of Soviet conventional war preparations, these have not been written into a national intelligence estimate. The JCS and OSD planners are now researching new measures that utilize early warning more effectively but these studies will not be finished until late this fall. In this connection, I and the National Warning Staff will present a briefing to the Mobilization Steering Group, chaired by Craig Alderman, on 7 September at the Pentagon. Nonetheless, DOD planners still incorporate unrealistically short warning times into their plans primarily because changes in warning posture have not been reflected in a new national estimate. Moreover, the process of obtaining alternate NATO perceptions and plans on warning can take several years to accomplish. The NIO for Warning and the National Warning Staff are working on all fronts with all parties concerned, but a CIA briefing that contradicts a JCS presentation next week seems likely. At a minimum, I believe it is my responsibility to:
 - a. Work with both the CIA and JCS briefers to prevent conflict.

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SUBJECT: House Armed Services Committee Hearings

- b. Testify about developments in our warning doctrine and strategy that are generally accepted at the Community level.
- c. Attend all the hearing sessions at which US officials testify and be available for questions.
- 4. I am already in close touch with the NIO/GPF on these matters and will continue to be so.

Charles E. Allen

Attachments:
House Armed Services
letters

cc: NIO/GPF

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U.S. House of Representatives committee on armed services

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August 24, 1988

G RIM WINCUP STAFF DIRECTOR

Mr. William H. Webster Director, Central Intelligence Agency Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Mr. Webster:

I am planning to conduct a set of hearings during the week of September 7, 1988, on Soviet mobilization readiness and the U.S. defense program. I would like your expert witnesses to appear at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, September 8, 1988, in Room 2118 of the Rayburn House Office Building before the Defense Policy Panel of the Armed Services Committee.

The specific questions on which the Defense Policy Panel is seeking the Central Intelligence Agency views are:

- 1. What is the current readiness status of Warsaw Pact forces? How would you characterize their posture? What is the defensive or offensive character of their deployment, their readiness, their manning levels, their training? How long would it take them to mobilize for an attack on NATO? What is the possibility they could attack without reinforcements from the Soviet Union?
- 2. What warning would we be likely to get of a Soviet deliberate and hasty mobilization. What would we see? How confident would the intelligence community be of a Soviet decision to attack? What impact would the loss of strategic surprises have on Soviet willingness to attack?
- 3. How do the Soviets think a war with NATO would start? Are there differences in the views of the political and military leaderships? How would you characterize Soviet grand strategy and operational strategy? What do the Soviets believe about U.S. and NATO strategy? Do they see any difference between our grand strategy and our operational strategy? How would they view a NATO decision to mobilize or to execute the Rapid Reinforcement Plan?

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Mr. William H. Webster August 24, 1988 Page two

4. What impact has General Secretary Gorbachev had on your view of these issues?

Understanding the Soulet liews on these issues will greatly assist us in understanding the basis for the U.S. defense program. The hearing will be held in closed session to allow for free discussion

Singerely,

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Les Aspur Chairman

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U.S. House of Representatives committee on armed services

Mashington, DC 20515

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August 24

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Admiral William J. Crowe, Jr. Chairman, Office of the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff The Pentagon, 2E873 Washington, D.C. 20318-0001

Dear Admiral Crowe:

I am planning to conduct a set of hearings during the week of September 7, 1988, on Soviet mobilization readiness and the U.S. defense program. I have scheduled a DoD hearing for 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, September 8, 1988, in Room 2118 of the Rayburn House Office Building before the Defense Policy Panel of the Armed Services Committee. I would appreciate it if you would make either the Director of the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff or the Director for Strategic Plans and Policy (J-5) available to testify.

The specific questions on which the Defense Policy Panel is seeking DoD answers are:

- What assumptions regarding Soviet mobilization readiness does the Department of Defense use as the basis for its force planning? How long do you assume it would take the Warsaw Pact to mobilize for an attack on NATO? What is the readiness of Soviet ground forces in eastern Europe and the western military districts and how does their readiness affect your planning assumptions? What assumption do you make about the possibility that the Warsaw Pact could attack NATO without reinforcement from the Soviet Union?
- 2. How are assumptions about warning of Warsaw Pact preparations for war incorporated into DoD planning? How important are these assumptions in determining the size and readiness of our forces or the active/reserve mix? What warning of Soviet mobilization does the Department of Defense assume will be available to decision makers? How long does the Department of Defense assume it will take U.S. and NATO decision makers to react to warnings?

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Admiral William J. Crowe, Jr August 24, 1988
Page two

- 3. What does the Department see as the difference between the grand strategy and the operational strategy of U.S. and Soviet ground and air forces?
- 4. Have the recent high level U.S./Soviet defense contacts provided a basis for changing any of these assumptions?

Understanding the Department's views on these issues will greatly assist us in understanding the basis for the U.S. defense program. The hearing vill be held in closed session to allow for free discussion.

Les Aspin

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LA:jtdd